

# Network News

Summer 2006\*YOUNG PARENTS NETWORK\*Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Young Parents  
network



*Veridian Credit Union presents Young Parents Network with the grant. Pictured from left to right: Veridian representatives Jennifer Roberts and Mark Koppedryer with YPN staff Beula Dvorak, Kathy Kaiden and Brian Stutzman*

## VERIDIAN CREDIT UNION GRANT

Veridian Credit Union awarded Young Parents Network, through the Health, Welfare and Safety Grant process, \$4,000 to support the Parents as Teachers home visitation program in Linn County.

YPN is very excited to partner with Veridian to provide this community with an international early childhood parent education and family support program, serving families throughout pregnancy until their child enters kindergarten.

Home visitation is an integral component to any community that aspires to support families and meet the crucial needs of young children. At the core of home visitation is prevention – keeping families safe, healthy, self-sufficient, and connected to support resources.

Thank you to Veridian for supporting this vital program!

## BABY STEPS TO SUCCESS

Success comes in very small increments – baby steps as some would say. Often staff only plant the seeds that sprout and grow after the participant has departed from our services.

In August 2005, four Preschool Group Moms who had been attending group since their prenatal days “graduated” from the program as their children entered kindergarten. Wanting to continue to be active in the community they all have since gotten involved within the school setting including the PTA, room mothers, and classroom volunteers.

Then there is the mother of a three year old who came to YPN reluctant and only to satisfy the Department of Human Services. She had lost custody of her son and was ready to give in and give up. With the encouragement of her group facilitator and the other preschool moms, she has continued to attend YPN. Now after attending more than 20 sessions she once again regained full custody of her son. The attitude of this young mom has undergone an amazing transformation from one of a very critical, negative attitude that made her a challenge in group to a person who has contributed honestly and sincerely within the group.

The lives of parents like these are impacted on a daily basis at YPN. We are able to do so much in part because of people like you. Thank you for volunteering for YPN. You do make a difference.





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## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S CORNER

In evaluating my assignments for this newsletter I made an executive decision. My traditional Executive Director's Corner will be supplemented with my other assignment which is the Volunteer Spotlight. This is not in an effort to save time but more to ensure there is enough space to give someone their due recognition.

Over the years YPN has been blessed with a great number of board members and volunteers. These individuals speak volumes about the success of the agency. It is my opportunity to highlight an individual in this article who defines dedication and service.



**Brian Stutzman,  
Executive Director**



**Brad Hart,  
YPN Board Chair**

Brad Hart, the current chair of the Board of Directors, is one of those unique people who have an impact on an agency. Tireless participation and dedication are at the very heart of why Brad should be recognized as a key factor in the continued growth and success of YPN. A leader in the affiliation process and his ongoing support in an operational capacity, make it easy to highlight why he is truly a special volunteer and board member.

Executive directors come to accept that it is the nature of the job that every year, leadership at the board level is entrusted to a new chair. Even though it can often feel cumbersome to redefine and reestablish how a board chair and executive directors work together, it provides a renewed energy that is very necessary. In order to succeed in the non profit world, agencies must always proactively evolve.

Board chairs like Brad Hart lead by lofty goals, high expectations, and role modeling all of the above. Brad has not only exhibited these traits, but done so with never asking that which he is not willing to give. People like Brad are imperative to continue to garner support for nonprofits and advocate for this very necessary sector that does impact us all.

On behalf of all the families and children that benefit from the services of YPN, thank you Brad for being a catalyst for the many accomplishments YPN continues to have. It has been an honor to take a brief moment to spotlight the efforts that are a model for board member involvement.

Best Regards,

*Brian Stutzman*

*Executive Director  
Young Parents Network*

# 2005 YPN Donors

We would like to acknowledge the friends of YPN who have supported our agency and our mission in 2005. We greatly appreciate both the monetary and in-kind support from these donors. On behalf of the children and families served by YPN, thank you for making a difference.

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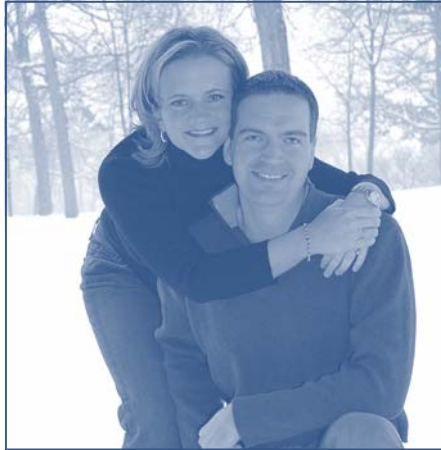
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# HOW THE BOOK BUY BACK PROGRAM BENEFITS YPN

What a difference an individual's passion can make when trying to impact the lives of others. Young Parents Network (YPN) has many individuals who give tirelessly of their time and talents to help us fulfill our mission of impacting families and children of this community and surrounding communities. Justin and Kelli Salow are a prime example. Their creativity and generosity have had a major impact on the programs of YPN. Within a short two-year period of time, Justin and Kelli have donated over \$5,800 to the programs of YPN through their Book Buy Back Program.

Justin is an accountant and CPA with Community National Bank in Waterloo and is a co-owner of IAHomes For Sale.Com. Kelli is a Program Manager with Cogent Health Care in Cedar Rapids. How did two individuals in our community start a program on their own and choose YPN as the charity to benefit from their efforts? Justin has always been intrigued with the power of the Internet and while attending college, he discovered that college textbooks could be sold online, even the books that the local bookstore would not buy back. Normally, college students are able to sell their textbooks back to the bookstore at the end of each semester. When the semester ends, students can be found lining up at the bookstore to sell back their books. However, not all of the books are purchased back by the bookstore as some professors will use different books for the upcoming semester or update books to a new edition. Instead of just throwing away his outdated books, Justin began selling his old books online.



*Justin and Kelli Salow*

Justin later learned about YPN through a friend who was working at the agency. He began the Book Buy Back Program as a way to sell unwanted textbooks, like he did in college, and added a philanthropic twist, that YPN would benefit from the program. Justin approached Kelly Lacy at the Kirkwood Community College Bookstore about his idea to sell their unwanted books online and she agreed that Kirkwood and YPN would make a perfect fit. "The relationship with the Kirkwood students and Kirkwood Bookstore staff is invaluable," states Justin and Kelli Salow, "This program would not be possible without them."

During the Kirkwood book buyback period, Kirkwood students deposit their unwanted textbooks into bins located on campus. The Kirkwood Bookstore staff then collects, sorts, and boxes up all of the books. At the end of the buyback period, Justin picks up the books and takes them home. From there both Justin and Kelli prepare the books to be sold on eBay which involves pick up, sorting, storage, listing, pricing, packaging, putting description on eBay, accounting, and correspondence with buyers and finally shipping.

Why do Justin and Kelli do this? "YPN supports and educates people at perhaps the most critical point in their young lives. Knowing that Kelli and I are helping to do our small part to support such a wonderful program as YPN is a wonderful feeling," said Justin. All of us at YPN feel very fortunate to have such dedicated and giving individuals be a part of our daily efforts to strengthening our community one family at a time. Thank you Justin and Kelli, from all of the young families & children, the boards and staff and volunteers of YPN! Your hard work does make a difference.



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## YOUNG PARENTS NETWORK MISSION

Young Parents Network is dedicated to the prevention of adolescent pregnancy, and building successful families.

YPN serves families in Benton, Cedar, Iowa, Jones and Linn Counties.

The mission of Young Parents Network would not be possible without the efforts of our Board of Directors, Board of Trustees, and staff.



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